

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated March 30, 2004, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration based on the above claim amendment and the following remarks. Applicant respectfully submits that the claims as presented are in condition for allowance.

In the Office Action dated March 30, 2004, Claims 1-36 were rejected as follows:

- Claims 1, 8, and 11-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Voit (U.S. Patent No. 6,163,597);
- Claims 2-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Voit in view of Shaffer (U.S. Patent No 6,091,810, hereinafter "Shaffer '810 Patent");
- Claims 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Voit in view of Riskin (U.S. Patent No. 4,757,267);
- Claims 16-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hanson (U.S. Patent No. 5,963,861) in view of Shaffer '810 Patent; and
- Claims 27-36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Voit in view of Shaffer (U.S. Patent 2002/0136381, hereinafter "Shaffer '381 Application").

To the extent any of these rejections might still be applied to claims presently pending in this application, it is respectfully traversed. Independent claims are claims 1, 13, 16 and 27.

Regarding claims 1 and 13, Applicant believes that Voit does not teach each and every element and limitation of each claim to justify the § 102(e) rejection.

With respect to claim 1, Applicant believes at least the following elements are not disclosed in Voit:

providing information related to the call to a geographic information system (GIS system), wherein the GIS system is located at a location associated with the called party;

obtaining a forwarding telephone number of the called party from the GIS system, wherein the forwarding telephone number is found by the GIS system; and

Similarly, with respect to claim 13, Applicant believes at least the following element is not disclosed in Voit:

a service control point for receiving the query and for obtaining a forwarding telephone number from a GIS system, wherein the forwarding telephone number is found by the GIS system, wherein the GIS system is located at a location associated with the called party.

In the passages of Voit referenced in the Office Action (see, column 3, lines 43-59; column 8, lines 7-15; and column 7, lines 13-34), there is no disclosure of a GIS system as recited in claims 1 and 13. Voit discloses the use of two databases. The first database associates the calling party's number with a zip code, and the second database associates that zip code with the called party's telephone number. Through these two separate databases, a call intended for a subscriber is routed to a telephone number found by that zip code in the second database, and the zip code is found in the first database using the calling party's telephone number. Such use of the zip code as the linking key between databases is suggested in the background section of the present application on pages 1-3. On the other hand, the GIS system of the present invention, according to exemplary embodiments is based on GIS technology that overcomes many disadvantages of the zip code base databases such as those taught in Voit. Voit does not teach that a forwarding telephone number of a called party is obtained from the GIS system, as recited in each of claims 1 and 13 of the present application.

Additionally, as recited in claims 1 and 13, the GIS system "is located at a location associated with the called party." This embodiment is described, for example, at least in Figures

1a and 2a of the present application. Voit does not teach this feature. According to Voit, at column 6, lines 57-58, the first database is a proprietary database 146, and the second database is one of a plurality of customer accessible databases 148-150. At column 6, line 64, Voit teaches that "[t]he contents of the proprietary database 146 is accessible only to the telephone operating company" (emphasis added). Accordingly, at least the proprietary database 146, due to the exclusive access to the telephone operating company, cannot be "located at a location associated with the called party" as recited in claims 1 and 13. Modifying Voit to arrive at what is claimed, e.g., placing the proprietary database 146 at a called party's location, would have destroyed the integrity of the proprietary database, and therefore one of ordinarily skilled in the art would not be so motivated to modify Voit.

Accordingly, Applicant believes that the rejections of claims 1 and 13 have been overcome, and claims 1-15 are patentable over Voit for at least the reason that Voit does not suggest the use of a GIS system that "is located at a location associated with the called party."

Claim 16 recites a method for routing a call from a calling party to a called party, and it has been amended to include the following underlined limitations:

receiving the call intended for the called party at a service switching point;

querying a service control point for instructions to route the call;

presenting the calling party with a menu of choices prior to contacting a GIS system, wherein the GIS system is located at a location associated with the called party;

receiving from the calling party a selection based on the menu of choices;

providing the selection to the GIS system;

obtaining a forwarding telephone number of the called party from the GIS system, wherein the forwarding telephone number is found by the GIS system; and

routing the call to a location associated with the forwarding telephone number.

The Office Action admitted that Hanson does not teach of using a service switching point or service control point, but asserted that it would have been obvious to use SSPs or SCP if the system of Hanson was implemented in a landline system. The Office Action further asserted that Hansen can be modified in view of the Shaffer '810 Patent. Specifically, the Office Action alleged that "Shaffer teaches that it was well known in the art to use a GIS system in which the GIS system involves the use of SSPs and SCP and wherein the SSP queries for information for forwarding numbers" (citing Shaffer '810 Patent, column 18, lines 15-36).

In response, Applicant respectfully submits that neither Hanson nor the Shaffer '810 Patent teaches the GIS system "is located at a location associated with the called party," as recited in amended claim 16. Specifically, in column 18, lines 15-36 and Figure 2, the Shaffer '810 Patent discloses that routing is made based on information retrievable from "Location B," which is not a location associated with the called party "Location A."

Claim 27 recites a method for routing a call from a calling party to a called party, comprising the following elements:

receiving the call at a service switching point;

querying a service control point for instructions to route the call;

providing information related to the call to a GIS system, wherein the GIS system is located at a location associated with the called party;

obtaining a plurality of forwarding telephone numbers from the GIS system, wherein the forwarding telephone numbers are found by the GIS system;

soliciting the calling party to select one of the plurality of forwarding telephone numbers;

routing the call to the one of the plurality of forwarding telephone numbers if the calling party responds within a predetermined duration; and

routing the call to a default location if the calling party fails to respond within the predetermined duration.

The Office Action asserted that Voit can be modified in view of the Shaffer '381 Application. However, the Office Action failed to indicate that the Shaffer '381 Application discloses "the GIS system is located at a location associated with the called party," as recited in claim 27. Applicant believes that the remarks above with respect to claims 1 and 13 are applicable here for overcoming the rejection of claim 27 as well. Accordingly, Applicant believes that the rejection of claims 27-36 should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing all of the claims in this case are believed to be in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions or determine that any further action is desirable to place this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone Applicant's undersigned representative at the number listed below.

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